

board, and Peter S. Levi, president, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce; Paul Rodriguez, chair-elect, and CiCi Rojas, president, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City; and Thomas H. Holcom, Jr., member, board of directors, Angel Flight Central, Inc.

Statement on the Withdrawal of the Nomination of Miguel A. Estrada To Be United States Court of Appeals Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit

September 4, 2003

It is with regret that, at the request of Miguel Estrada, I have today withdrawn his nomination to the United States Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit. I understand and respect his decision and wish Mr. Estrada and his family the best.

Mr. Estrada received disgraceful treatment at the hands of 45 United States Senators during the more than 2 years his nomination was pending. Despite his superb qualifications and the wide bipartisan support for his nomination, these Democrat Senators repeatedly blocked an up-or-down vote that would have led to Mr. Estrada's confirmation. The treatment of this fine man is an unfortunate chapter in the Senate's history.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

Statement on Signing the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003

September 4, 2003

Today, I have signed into law S. 1435, the "Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003." The Act provides for analysis of the incidence and effects of prison rape in Federal, State and local institutions, and for information, resources, recommendations and funding to protect individuals from prison rape. The Act also creates a National Prison Rape Reduction Commission.

Section 7(h) of the Act purports to grant to the Commission a right of access to any Federal department or agency information it

considers necessary to carry out its duties, and section 7(k)(3) provides for release of information to the public. The executive branch shall construe sections 7(h) and 7(k)(3) in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to withhold information when its disclosure could impair deliberative processes of the Executive or the performance of the Executive's constitutional duties and, to the extent possible, in a manner consistent with Federal statutes protecting sensitive information from disclosure.

George W. Bush

The White House,
September 4, 2003.

NOTE: S. 1435, approved September 4, was assigned Public Law No. 108-79. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Proclamation 7701—National Days of Prayer and Remembrance, 2003

September 4, 2003

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

As we approach the second anniversary of September 11, 2001, we remember all that we lost as Americans and recognize all that we have witnessed about the character of America. During these National Days of Prayer and Remembrance, we honor those who were killed and their families, and we ask God for strength and wisdom as we carry out the noble mission that our Nation began that morning.

The passage of time cannot erase the pain and devastation that were inflicted on our people. We will always remember those who were brutally taken from us. And we ask God to comfort the loved ones left behind; their courage and determination have inspired our Nation.

We thank God for the unity and compassion Americans have demonstrated since September 11, 2001. The great strength of

America is the heart and soul of the American people. And we will continue to help those who are hurting or are in need.

We pray that God watch over our brave men and women in uniform. We are grateful to them, and to their families, for their service and sacrifice. We pray for peace and ask God for patience and resolve in our war against terror and evil.

This conflict was begun on the timing and terms of others. It will end in a way, and at an hour, of our choosing.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Friday, September 5, through Sunday, September 7, 2003, as National Days of Prayer and Remembrance. I ask that the people of the United States and places of worship mark these National Days of Prayer and Remembrance with memorial services, the ringing of bells, and evening candlelight remembrance vigils. I invite the people of the world to share in these Days of Prayer and Remembrance.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 8, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on September 9.

Proclamation 7702—Patriot Day, 2003

September 4, 2003

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Two years ago, more than 3,000 innocent people lost their lives when a calm September morning was shattered by terrorists driven by hatred and destruction.

On that day, and in its aftermath, we saw the greatness of America in the bravery of victims; in the heroism of first responders who laid down their lives to save others; in the compassion of people who stepped forward to help those they had never met; and in the generosity of millions of Americans who enriched our country with acts of service and kindness. Since that day, we have seen the greatness of America further demonstrated in the courage of our brave men and women in uniform who have served and sacrificed in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and around the world to advance freedom and prevent terrorist attacks on America.

As we remember September 11, 2001, we reaffirm the vows made in the earliest hours of our grief and anger. As liberty's home and defender, America will not tire, will not falter, and will not fail in fighting for the safety and security of the American people and a world free from terrorism. We will continue to bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to them. This Patriot Day, we hold steady to this task.

By a joint resolution approved December 18, 2001 (Public Law 107–89), the Congress has designated September 11 of each year as "Patriot Day."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 11, 2003, as Patriot Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities, including remembrance services and candlelight vigils. I also call upon the Governors of the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, as well as appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag be flown at half-staff on Patriot Day. In addition, I call upon all Americans to display the flag at half-staff from their homes on that day and to observe a moment of silence beginning at 8:46 a.m. eastern daylight time to honor the innocent victims who lost their lives as a result of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and